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BUT HOW THEY ARE TOLD.

The critically acclaimed *Jim Henson's The Storyteller: Ghosts* celebrates four mythic tales of when ghosts haunted the Earth, inspired by folklore from around the world and told in the spirit of Jim Henson's beloved television series.

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-*Geeks WorldWide*

"...fresh and exciting."

-*Comics: The Gathering*



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THE JIM HENSON COMPANY

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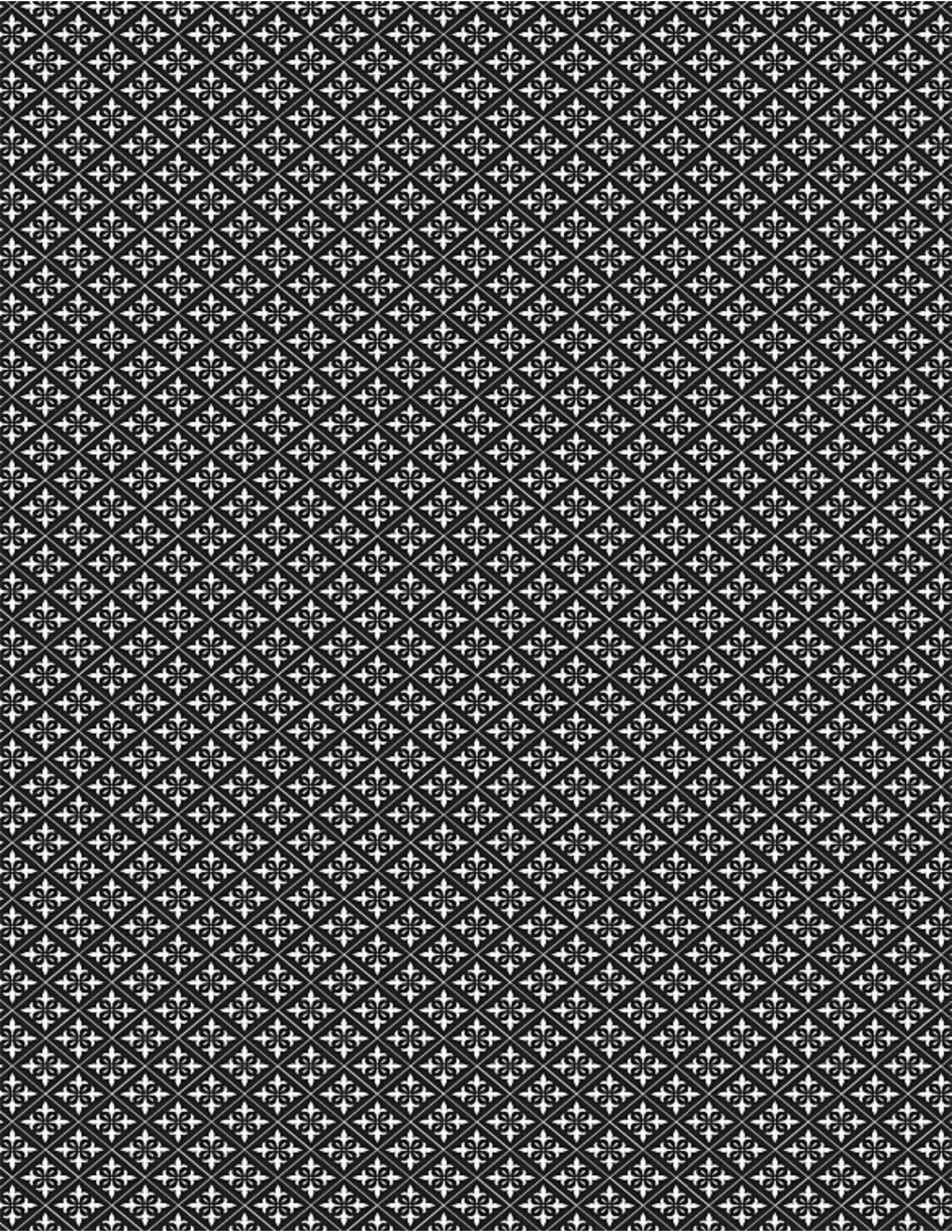
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Jim Henson's™
THE STORYTELLER
Ghosts







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TELLER™

Ghosts

THE MYLING

Story & Art by

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ENVY & ASH

Story & Art by

Jennifer Rostowsky

THE LAST LULLABY

Story & Art by

Michael Walsh

THE PROMISE

Story & Art by

VER

Letters by

Tim Campbell







the MYLING

"Ghost stories are rarely happy"—but somehow, they can still be super fun. Sure, they deal with dark and tragic themes such as loss, grief, death, and in this tale's case, the abandonment of unwanted infants, but their visual vocabulary is rich with cool elements like haunted castles, glowing skeletons, and all sorts of other spooky things.

I've always enjoyed these kinds of stories because of their imagery, so I spent many hours drawing ghosts as a child. Like many other horror fans, I find comfort in the fictional darkness, and the Scandinavian tale of the *Myling* is a particularly dark one. The *Myling* (or *Uthurd*) is the spirit of an abandoned child, crying (or in some tales, singing) in the night, waiting for victims to latch onto, and then demanding to be carried under its growing weight. As I said, pretty weird stuff. So, of course, as soon as I found out about the story, I knew I had to draw it.

The challenge was to create a story that was fun to read despite its grimness. So when I started sketching grotesque baby ghosts riding on the backs of unsuspecting Scandinavians, I also started giving them bits of dialogue that would serve to elevate the grimness while establishing a relationship. I decided to give the *Myling* a brother, and the story pretty much wrote itself from there. Yes, I've had a few nightmares about having evil ghost twin sons myself during the creative process, and I had some concerns along the way that the plot might be too dark. But in the end, I had great fun, and that's what ghost stories are really about: being scared and having fun at the same time.

I hope you'll have at least half as much fun reading it as I've had creating it.

— *Mark Lazzaro*





HMPF!
SOUNDS
LIKE A REAL
BONE-CHILLER.



IT ALL
STARTED IN THE
FROZEN FIELDS OF
SCANDINAVIA...



THE TIMES WERE HARSH BACK
THEN—FAMINE AND DISEASE HAD
DEVASTATED THE COUNTRY.

BUT EVEN IN THE
DARKEST OF DAYS,
THERE IS ALWAYS A
GLIMMER OF LIGHT...

WAAAH!
WAAAH!



A YOUNG SERVANT FELL
IN LOVE WITH THE SON OF
HER MASTER, AND GAVE
BIRTH TO BEAUTIFUL,
TWIN BABY BOYS.

WAAAH!
WAAAH!

WE HAVE
TO KEEP 'EM
QUIET! IF MY
FATHER FINDS
OUT...



WANTING TO SPARE HER CHILDREN A CRUEL DEATH AT THE HAND OF THE MASTER, THE MOTHER WALKED OUT INTO THE COLD CHILL OF THE FOREST.



THE SERVANT SAID HER SORROWFUL FAREWELL TO HER CHILDREN...





...AND LEFT THEM IN
THE FOREST, TO BE
CONSUMED BY THE
WINTER FROST.



IT DID NOT TAKE LONG FOR NATURE'S COLD SILENCE TO DESCEND, BUT BEFORE THE WINTER'S EVE COULD CLAIM THE LIVES OF BOTH CHILDREN...



...A WANDERER CAME UPON THEIR BASKET, AND FOUND ONE CHILD STILL ALIVE.



YOU'RE GOING TO BE OKAY.

THE WANDERER RESOLVED TO CARE FOR HIM AS HER OWN.



AND SHE JUST LEFT THE OTHER ONE IN THE SNOW LIKE THAT? JEEZ, THAT'S TERRIBLE!



GHOST STORIES ARE RARELY HAPPY, BUT HOLD YOUR JUDGMENT, THE MYLING'S TALE IS NOT YET FINISHED.



SO... WHAT IS A MYLING?

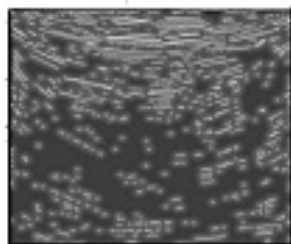
AH, YES. A MYLING IS
THE GHOST OF AN
ABANDONED CHILD.

IT IS A SPIRIT
BORN OUT OF
PAIN...

...AND
SORROW.

ALL OF THE SADNESS AND
NEGLECT INFLICTED UPON
THE CHILD TRANSFORMS ITS
SPIRIT INTO A VENGEFUL
GHOST, TRAPPED IN
TORMENTED LIMBO...

...INABLE
TO REST IN
PEACE.





IT WAS A MODEST
BUT ADVENTUROUS
LIFE...



...AND THE
WANDERER
TREATED HIM
FAIRLY.



BUT AS TIME WENT ON, THE
BOY GREW WISTFUL, WITH A
LONGING IN HIS HEART HE
COULD NOT PLACE.



EVENTUALLY, THE CHILD GREW OLD...THOUGH HE
ALWAYS FELT LIKE A PART OF HIM WAS MISSING.





MANY YEARS
PASSED.



LISTEN,
MY TIME IS
ALMOST UP,
AND YOU'VE
GROWN INTO
AN OLD MAN
YOURSELF.

I'VE
NEVER TOLD YOU
THIS, BECAUSE I
WANTED YOU TO
LIVE A HAPPY
LIFE...



BUT WHEN I FOUND
YOU, THERE WAS ANOTHER
BABY NEXT TO YOU IN
THE SNOW...ALREADY
DEAD...



...I'M
SORRY...



HIS LONGING IMBUE WITH NEW
PURPOSE, THE OLD MAN SET
OFF ON ONE LAST JOURNEY--
TO FIND HIS BROTHER.



BUT HE WAS UNPREPARED
FOR THE HORROR THAT
LAY AHEAD.

HE WANDERED
FOR MONTHS...



...HE WANDERED
FOR YEARS...



...BUT HE COULD
NOT FIND HIS
BROTHER.



NOW NEARING
THE END OF HIS
OWN LIFE...



...THE OLD MAN WAS
ALMOST READY TO GIVE
UP HIS SEARCH...







HE APPROACHED THE CRUMBLING COTTAGE WITH TREPIDATION IN HIS HEART.



WHAT HE SAW STIRRED WITHIN HIM A GREAT SENSE OF SADNESS. BUT HE RECOGNIZED THAT THERE WAS ONCE LOVE HERE, AND THE OLD MAN PRESSED ON.

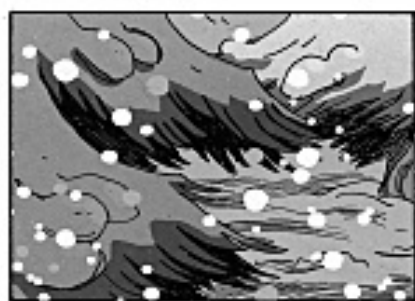


WAAAAAAAH







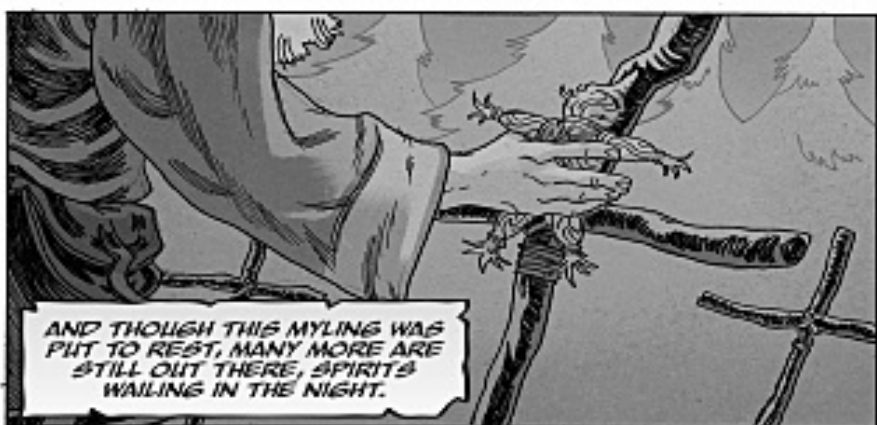




ONLY FREE IF LAID
TO REST WITH THE
BONES OF THEIR
MORTAL BODY.



AS I
HAVE SAID
BEFORE...





AS FOR THE OLD MAN...WITH HIS LIFE'S PURPOSE FINALLY FULFILLED, HE LIVED OUT THE REST OF HIS LIFE IN PEACE.



WOW, THAT REALLY WAS A GRIM STORY! AND NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT...



GOOD DOG!

...I THINK I'VE HAD ENOUGH BONES FOR TODAY.

THE END.

TALE TWO SUBSCRIPTION COVER
JENNIFER ROSTOWSKY





ENVY & ASH

I first fell in love with the *Ahp*—more commonly known as the *Krasue*—when I got into Southeast Asian horror games in high school, but I didn't know much about the *Ahp* besides the fact that they are these beautiful, blood-soaked spirits with no bodies.

Delving into the research for this story, I learned that because the myth of the *Ahp* is so widespread throughout Southeast Asia, there is no single origin story for the creature. But in all forms of media, the *Ahp* is always shown as a fetus-eating, murderous monster... and I wondered why that was.

As I began to research more, I noticed that the themes of black magic and sinfulness were extremely common in most variations of the tale. It shocked me that a woman who commits just one sin (like most people do!) would immediately transform into a flesh-eating ghost, and be portrayed in these stories as nothing but that.

I wanted to focus on the human that existed before the monster, and use the common themes I uncovered to weave an origin story for the *Ahp*. My character Molika is anything but perfect, and I decided to use her love story as the template to give the *Ahp* a more human and therefore more emotional background, shifting away from the portrayals of the *Ahp* as merely a bloody spirit. Nobody wants to be seen as a bloodthirsty ghost—but even more so, nobody wants to be made aware that they have actually become one, like Molika does.

- Jennifer Restawsky





ONCE UPON A TIME, IN A FARAWAY LAND,
THERE LIVED A YOUNG WOMAN NAMED MOLIKA.
BEAUTIFUL, SPOILED, AND INCREDIBLY
WEALTHY, SHE HAD EVERYTHING ANYONE
COULD EVER WANT--

--AN ALLURING LOVER,
A WARM HOME, DOTING
PARENTS...

...AND MORE
JEWELS THAN ONE
COULD IMAGINE.



THEY ALL
BELONGED
TO HER.

BUT EVEN FOR THE
RICH AND BEAUTIFUL,
LIFE CAN BE CRUEL.



AND FOR MOLIKA,
EVERYTHING WAS
ABOUT TO
CHANGE.









TO WIN BACK THE FAVOR
OF HER LOVER, MOLIKA
SHOWED HER WITH
ATTENTION AND
GIFTS--

EXOTIC
FRUITS...

...SHIMMERING
PEARLS...

...POETRY...

...AND LOVE.



AND IT WAS ALL
FOR NAUGHT.





SNIFFLE

SNIFFLE



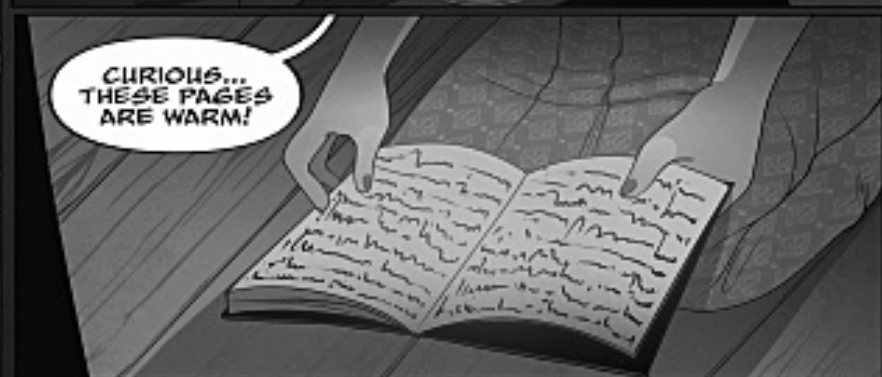
WHY AM I
EVEN TRYING
ANYMORE?



Huh?



THAT IS, UNTIL
SHE FOUND THE
BOOK.



BURN...
BLACK...
RIBBON...
LOVE...

IT'S A
LOVE
SPELL...

Oh,
GODS... THIS
COULD BE IT.
I COULD MAKE
NIMOL FALL IN
LOVE WITH ME
AGAIN.



AND SO SHE BEGAN TO
COLLECT THE ITEMS SHE
NEEDED FOR THIS SPELL
SHE HAD FOUND.

INCENSE.



MATCHES.

A FLAME.



BUT THERE WAS ONE
THING SHE COULD
NOT FIND.

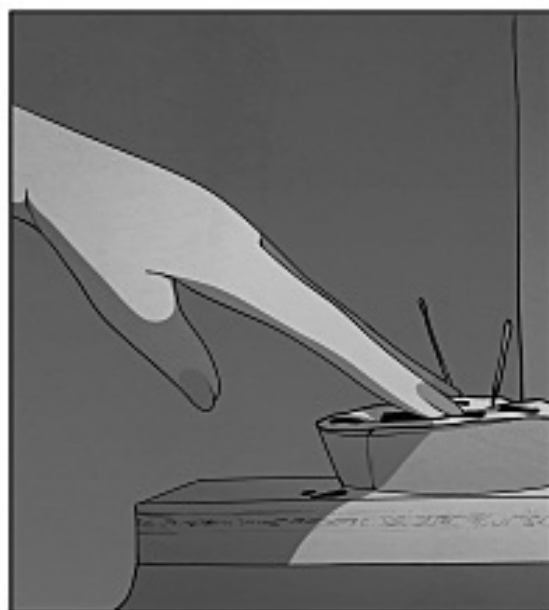
"A BLACK RIBBON..."
OF ALL THE THINGS I
DON'T HAVE, I DON'T
HAVE A BLACK
RIBBON.



GODS,
WHAT DO I
DO? WHAT DO
I DO? I CAN'T
LOSE HER!



MAYBE...





GREAT POWERS,
PLEASE GRANT
ME MERCY.

I KNOW
I COME TO YOU
SHORTHANDED, BUT
FOR THIS POWER,
I PROMISE YOU ALL
THE GEMS YOU
COULD EVER
WISH FOR.

MOLIKA BEGAN
CHANTING THE
SPELL, OVER AND
OVER AGAIN.



AS SHE CHANTED, HER CONFIDENCE
GREW. SHE COULD FEEL SOMETHING,
A SENSATION, AS THE SPELL
BEGAN TO TAKE HOLD.



BUT THEN...



AWHH! WHAT'S
HAPPENING?





DO YOU
THINK US
GREEDY?

GEMS?
WHAT COULD
WE DO WITH
GEMS?

AND YOU
BEG OF US TO
LEND OUR
POWERS TO
SUCH AN
INSOLENT
GIRL?

ONE SO
VAIN SHE
BELIEVES US
SUSCEPTIBLE TO
BRIBERY?

FOR
WHAT?
GEMS!



I'M
SORRY!
I DIDN'T
MEAN—!



FOR SUCH
INSOLENCE AND
BOLD ASSUMPTIONS,
ONE MUST BE
PUNISHED.

BUT I'M
SORRY! I WAS
DESPERATE,
OTHERWISE
I WOULD
NEVER HAVE
TRIED--!



PLEASE
STOP... WHAT
DO YOU WANT?
WHAT CAN I DO
TO MAKE YOU
STOP?

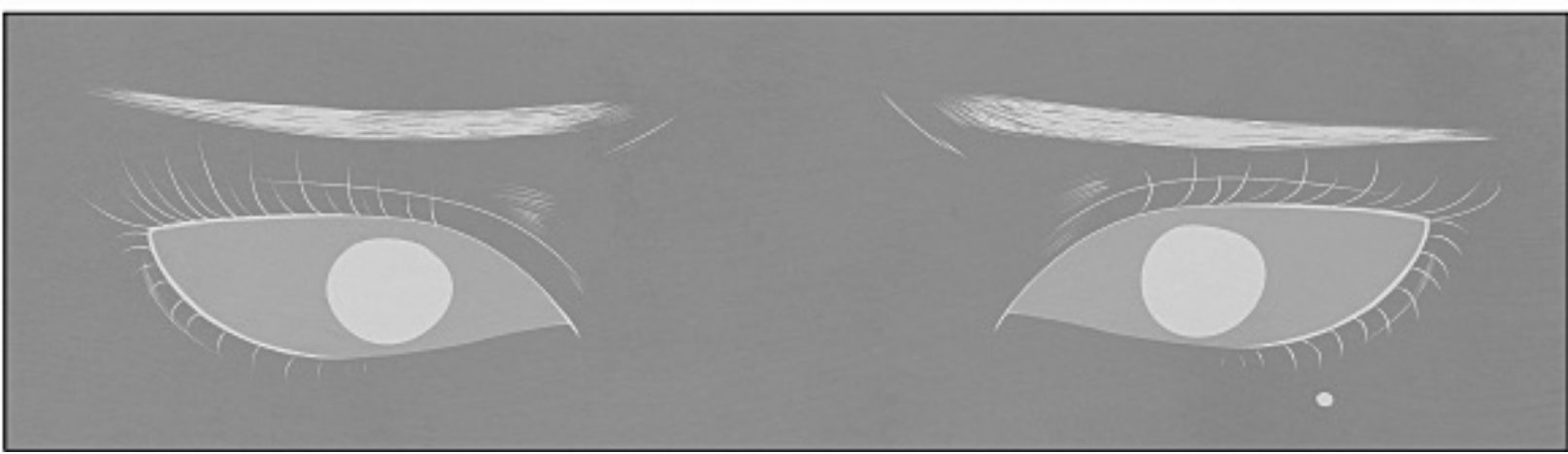


YOU
STILL DON'T
GET IT,
GIRL?

YOU MUST
FACE YOUR
PUNISHMENT!



HRRK!





AND SO, MOLIKA WAS
CURSED TO BECOME ONE
OF THE GHOSTS SHE HAD
DISRESPECTED IN HER
DESPERATION--

--SHE WAS CURSED
TO BECOME
AN AHP.







AHH!
WHO ARE YOU?
WHAT DO YOU
WANT WITH
ME?

SEREY...
YOU'VE STOLEN
MY LOVE AND
YOU'VE TURNED
HER AGAINST
ME...

...TURNED
ME INTO A
MONSTER!



I-I DON'T
KNOW WHO
YOU ARE!

I'LL
DESTROY
YOU LIKE YOU
DESTROYED
ME!



I-I'M
SORRY!





*SHE WAS CURSED TO SPEND
THE REST OF HER DAYS
HAUNTING THE NIGHT.*

*EVERYONE SHE
ENCOUNTERED
FLED FROM HER—
STRANGERS AND
LOVED ONES
ALIKE.*



AND JUST
LIKE THAT, THE
WEALTHY, SPOILED,
BEAUTIFUL
GIRL HAD
NOTHING.



ON THAT
NOTE, MAYBE
DESPERATE
TIMES *DON'T*
CALL FOR
DESPERATE
MEASURES.



BUT
ABOUT THAT
TREAT...

BECAUSE
YOU ASKED SO
NICELY... GIVE THIS OLD
MAN A MINUTE TO REST
HIS FEET AND I'LL GET
YOU THAT TREAT, OLD
FRIEND.

THE END.

TALE THREE SUBSCRIPTION COVER
JORGE MONLONGO





the LAST LULLABY

When I was offered this project, I knew immediately that I wanted to explore Irish folklore. The majority of my family is from Newfoundland, and if you go back another generation, Ireland. Looking through the vast number of legends from the green and rocky land, I stumbled upon the Banshee, or *Bean Sídhe* (also known as the *Bean sí*, *Baintsí*, *Ben síd*, and *Baintsíde*).

The recurring detail in all the writing on this ghostly apparition was that its wails foretold the death of a family member. When I read this, I knew that I had to use the tale of the Banshee...because at the time that I was beginning this story, my grandmother was dying of cancer.

I spoke with my grandmother before she passed, asking about the ghosts and folklore she grew up with in Newfoundland. She told me that on very misty nights, people would see the spirits of their lost family members roaming the streets or standing outside of their homes. This anecdote provided me with even more inspiration and another bit of lore I could mash up with my research on the Banshee.

When my grandmother passed, I was angry, sad, and confused. Like Brendan, I wanted some kind of catharsis. And I realized that channeling these emotions into my story might offer me resolution in the form of art therapy. I guess, in the end, it was all about learning to let go and saying goodbye.

- Michael Walsh

WWWWHOOOOO

RWOOF!

A
GHOST?!

WWWHOOOOSSSS

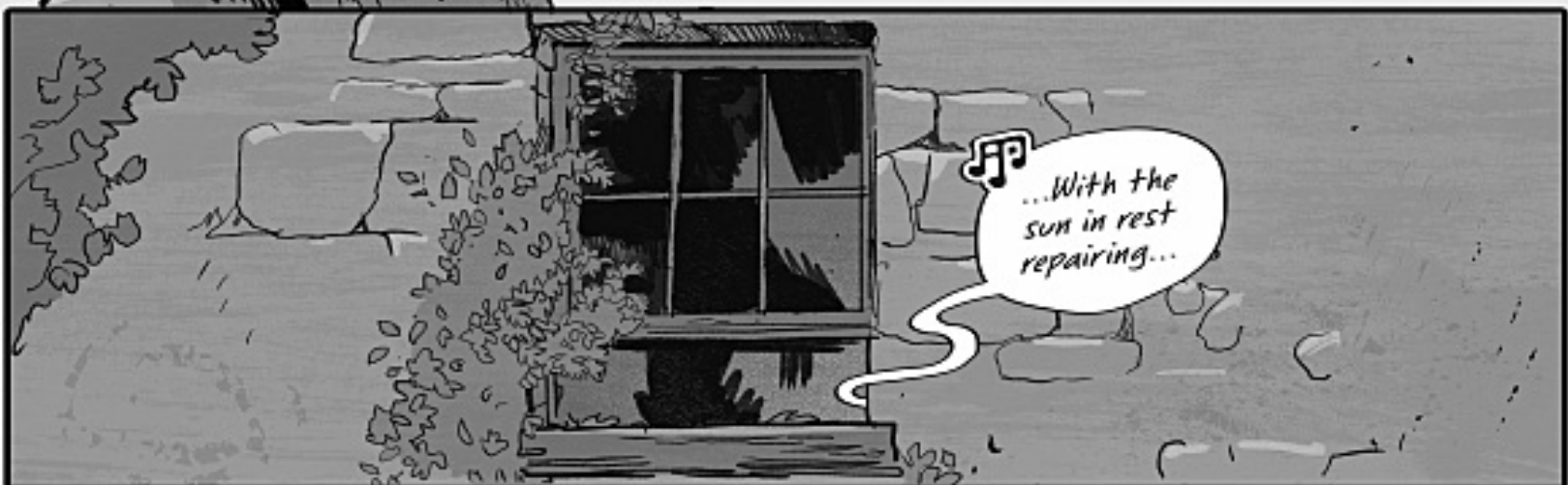
OR IT
COULD BE A
SPIRIT... MAYBE A
FAIRY. OR, WHAT
ABOUT A...

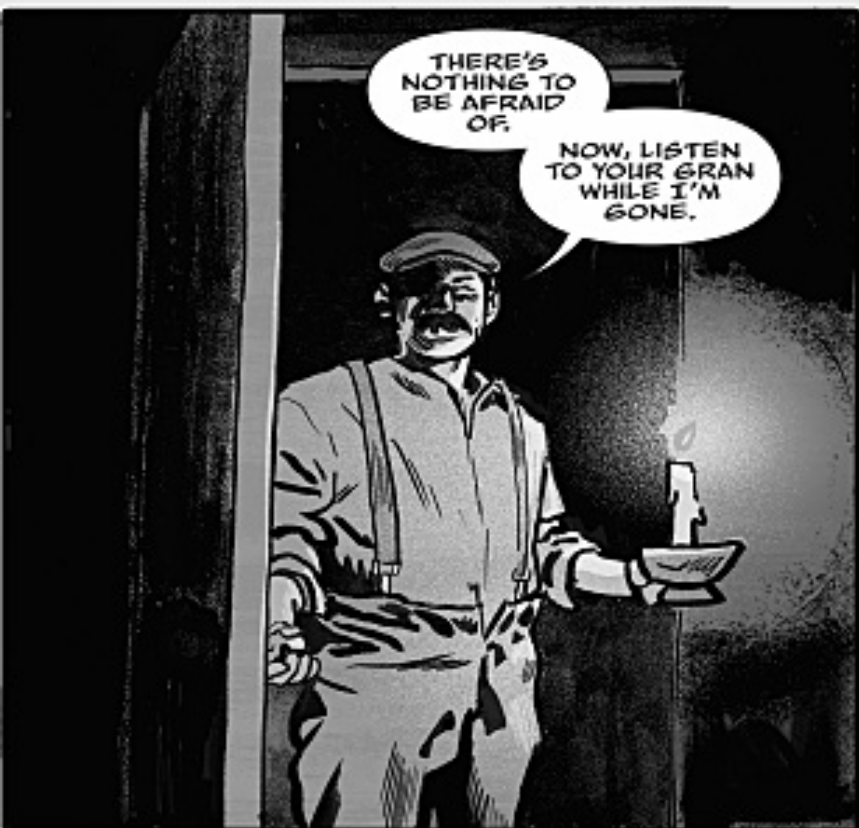
Hm.

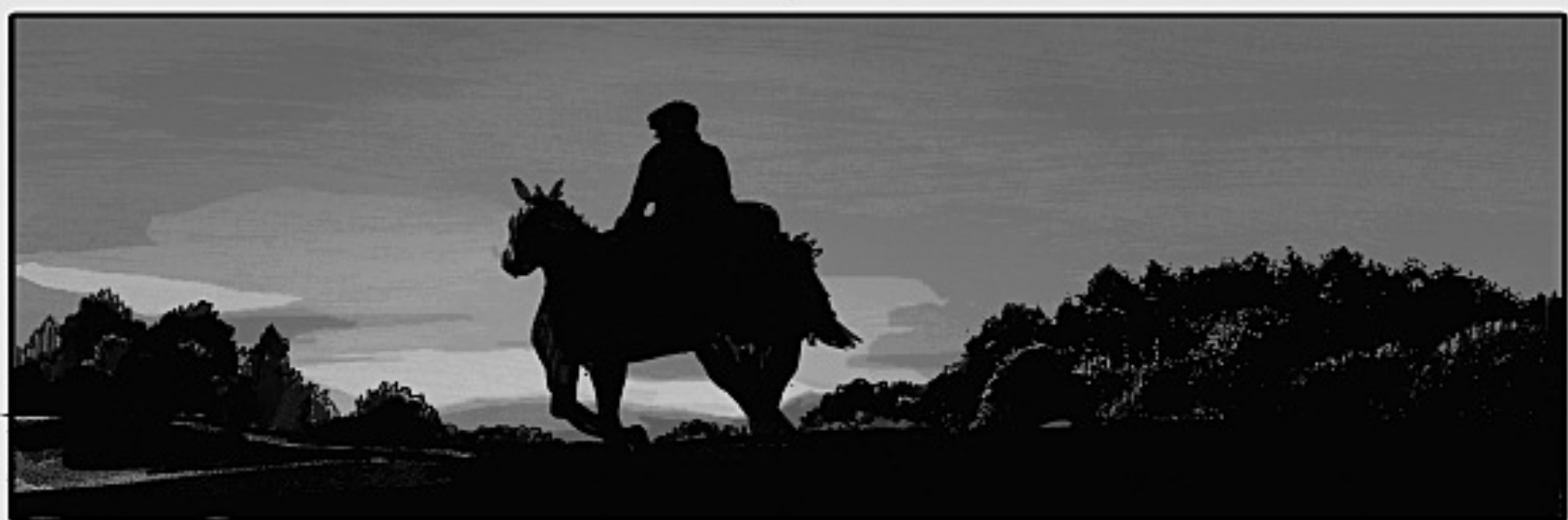
Ah, JUST THE
SONG OF THE
WIND. THOUGH IT
DOES REMIND
ME OF A
STORY.

SLUMP

SHUFFE
HERE WE GO
AGAIN...









AS THE WEEKS PASSED, BRENDAN BECAME RESTLESS. IGNORING THE WISHES OF HIS GRAN, HE BEGAN TO EXPLORE THE WOODS...



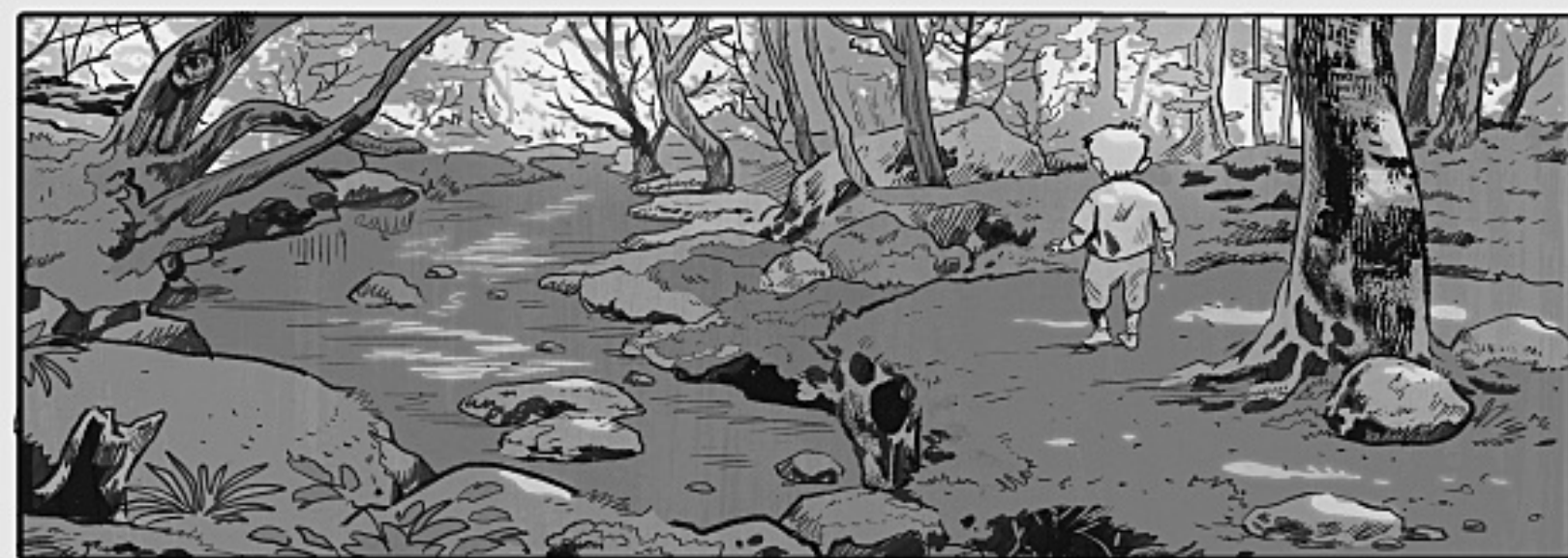
RATTLE



TWITCH



WOOO





I SWEAR
I SAW THE BEAN
SIDHE! SOMETHING
TERRIBLE IS GOING
TO HAPPEN TO
FATHER, JUST
LIKE WITH
MA.



Oh, honey, I'm
sure it was just
a tree in the wind.
You can't let your
imagination run
so wild.

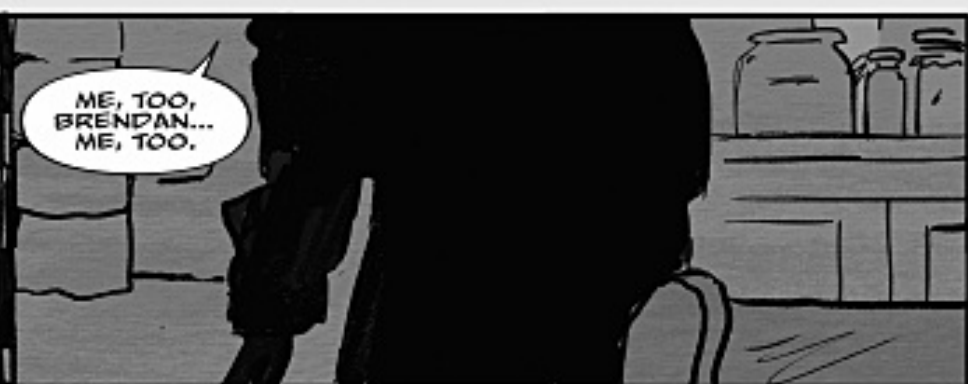
COUGH



AND YOUR
MOTHER... SHE
WAS SO VERY SICK,
BRENDAN. SHE IS
AT PEACE NOW.



NO! SHE
LEFT ME! AND
NOW FATHER
IS GONE,
TOO!









I WON'T LET
YOU TAKE MY
FATHER!



BRENDAN BELIEVED THAT
THIS DEADLY APPARITION
COULD BE REASONED
WITH.



THAT A BARGAIN
COULD BE
STRUCK.



PULL



CRREEKKKK





What do
you desire,
child?

THE BEAN SIDHE WAS
A PECULIAR TYPE OF
GHOST.

NOT ONLY DID IT PORTEND
THE DEATH OF A FAMILY
MEMBER...

I...
I...



HURRY,
CHILD!



...BUT IT WOULD ALSO
GRANT A WISH TO ANY
SOUL BRAVE ENOUGH
TO FACE IT.

I WANT
FATHER
TO COME
HOME!

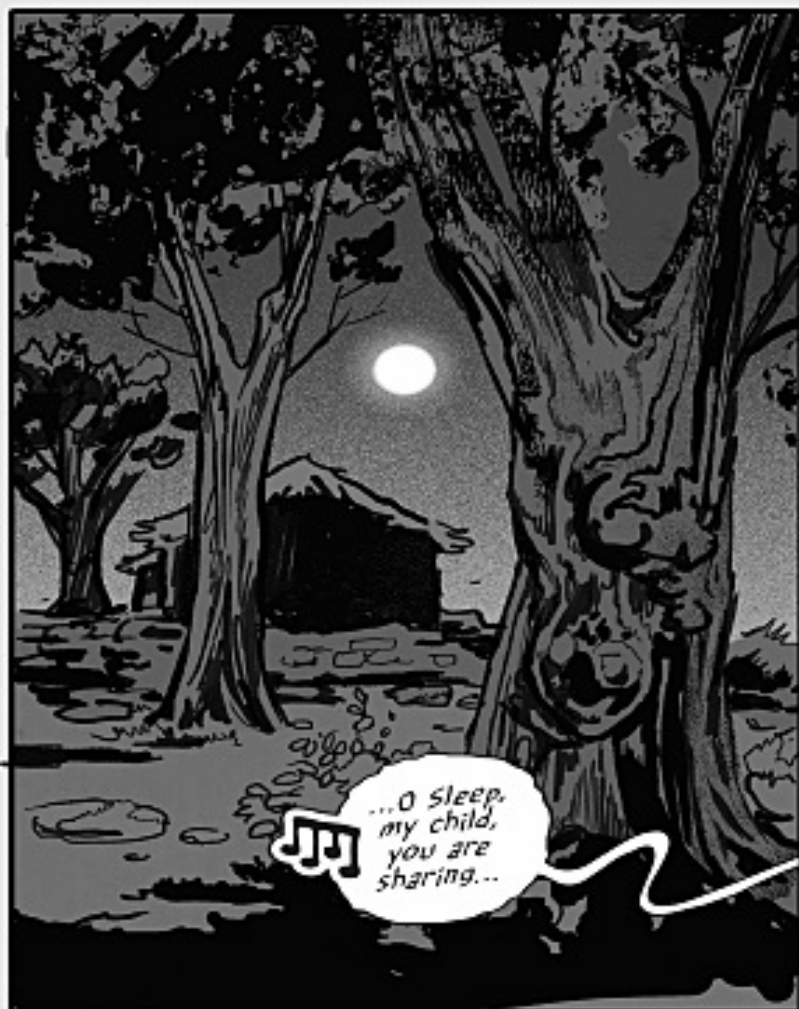


It
will be
done...











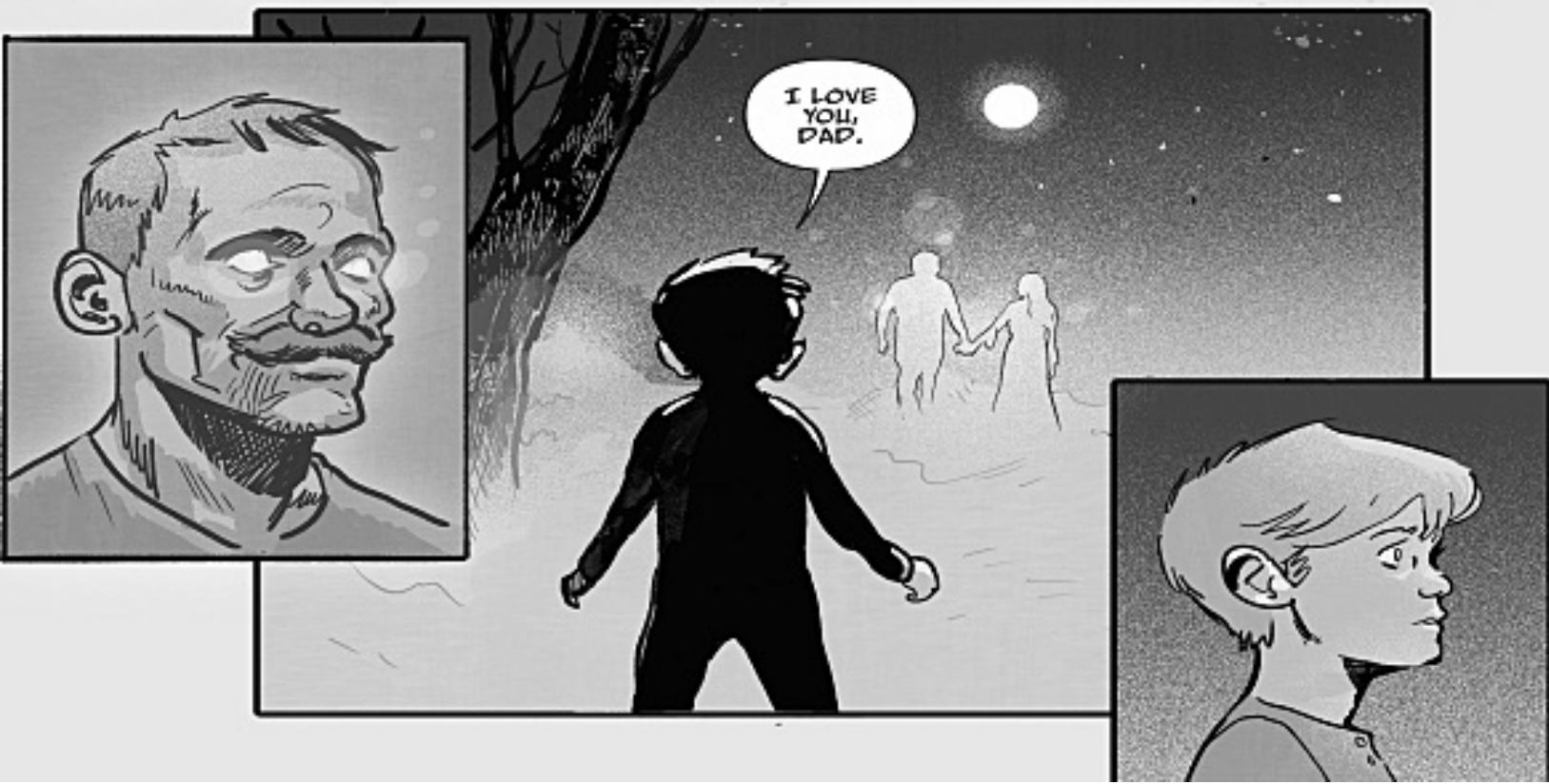


Brendan...

I was just with
your mother...it
was warm and
light, and now
it's so...
cold...

IT'S OKAY,
FATHER, IT'S
OKAY.

GO
BACK.
BE WITH
MA.





wwwHooooo

HIS FATHER AND
GRANDMOTHER...
POOR BOY, WHAT
HAPPENED TO
HIM?

BRENDAN USED THE LOVE OF
HIS FAMILY TO NOURISH AND GUIDE
HIM THROUGHOUT A LONG AND
HAPPY LIFE. HE HAD A LITTLE BOY
OF HIS OWN, AND SANG TO
HIM THAT VERY SAME
LULLABY.



AND WHENEVER
BRENDAN HEARD A
GHOSTLY WAILING IN
THE WIND...

YAWN

...HE'D
PULL HIS COVERS
EXTRA TIGHT AND
GO BACK TO THE
WARMTH OF HIS
DREAMS.



THE END.



TALE FOUR SUBSCRIPTION COVER

VER



the ROMISE

What remains of Slavic mythology is a curious collection of mythoses and scraps of superstition, as researched and archived by people much more diligent and knowledgeable about the topic than I am. Nonetheless, Slavic folklore has always been a source of fascination and inspiration for me—the strange nature of gods and spirits (or demons, or *Stworza* and *Zdusze*, as some sources would have it), and their relationship to how people in the past understood and explained the world around them.

Almost any of the beings in Slavic folklore could be classified as spirits or ghosts—a broad selection of personalities and roles to choose from. In my efforts to narrow down a topic, I decided to focus on the idea of ghosts as souls, and as such, *Veles* (also known as *Weles* or *Wolas*)—a god of magic and death, and the caretaker of an idyllic realm of the afterlife, *Nawia*—soon came to the forefront.

In researching beliefs surrounding death, one notion stood out to me with its bittersweet sentiment—that the swath of sky that we know as the Milky Way is the procession of the dead to *Nawia*, and each star on its arm is a soul. Shortly after, I found a particular passage about what a soul could be, and that “every person carries in them a light—those who are good, their light shines bright. Those who are evil, theirs shines weak.”

With these two threads, a story started taking shape in my head. I imagined the moment between life and death, the darkest night, in which you must carry enough light to illuminate the path to the afterlife. And I imagined bearing witness to those whose lights are too weak, or those who stray when they cannot stand to leave things undone—like an old woman, one lone soul among many, who had a promise to keep.

- VER



WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING OVER
THERE?



STARGAZING,
MY FRIEND! ON A
BEAUTIFUL NIGHT LIKE
THIS, HOW COULD I
RESIST?

WOULD YOU
CARE TO JOIN
ME?



TO LOOK AT THE STARS?
I'M SURE THEY'RE VERY
PRETTY, BUT...THANK
YOU, I'LL PASS.



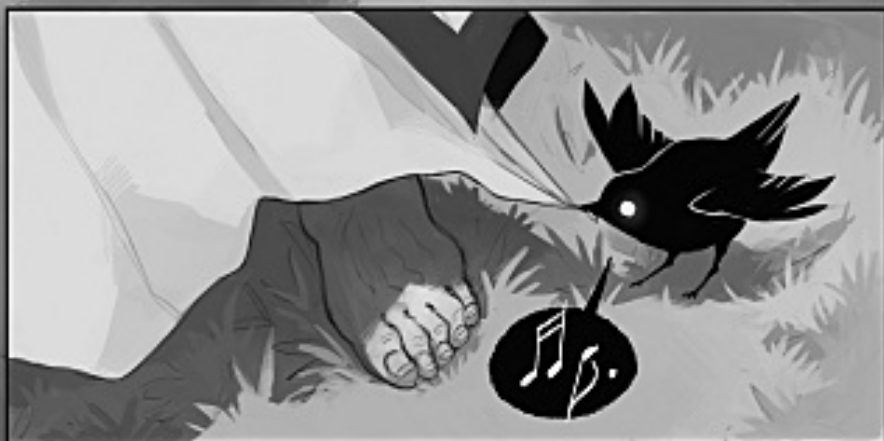
Oh, OF
COURSE YOU'D
THINK THEY ARE A
BORE. BUT THEY
HOLD MORE THAN
BEAUTY ALONE.

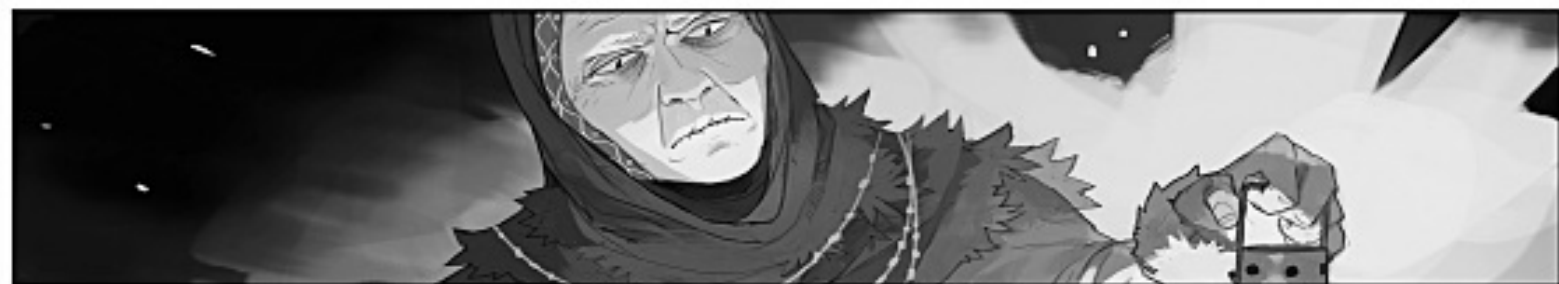


A STARRY
SKY LIKE
THIS...WHY,
IT REMINDS
ME OF A
STORY!

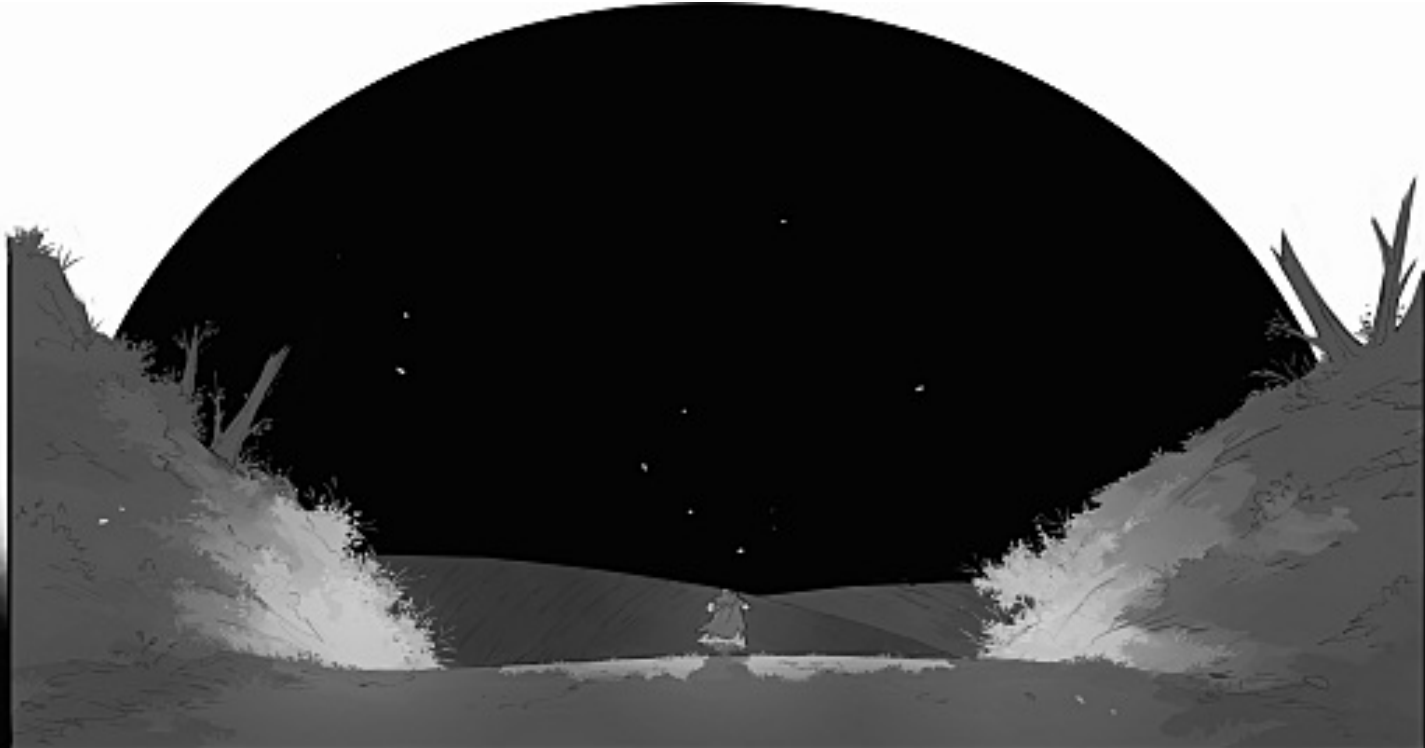


A STORY THAT BEGINS
IN A FARAWAY LAND,
WHEN THE NIGHT WAS
AT ITS DARKEST...









BECAUSE THE ZDUSZE
COULD ONLY LIVE IN
SHADOW AND MISERY.



THEY HATED
THE LIGHT, AS
IT SHOWED
WHAT THEY
TRULY WERE--
OR, WHAT WAS
LEFT OF
THEM.



YET THEY ALSO COVETED
THE LIGHT, SINCE THEY HAD
NONE OF THEIR OWN.



AND SO, WHERE THE
OLD WOMAN WENT,
THE CREATURES
FOLLOWED.



BUT HER LIGHT GREW
WEAKER AS THE NIGHT
GREW LONGER.



THE
IDUSZE...
I DON'T LIKE
THEM ONE
BIT!

AND YET,
THEY WERE THE
LEAST OF THE
OLD WOMAN'S
CONCERNS.

BEINGS
MUCH MORE
POWERFUL
WALKED IN THAT
NIGHT--BEINGS
THAT EVEN
THOSE WICKED
SOULS WERE
SCARED OF!

MORE
POWERFUL...?
WHAT WERE
THEY?

THOSE WHO WALKED
BETWEEN LIFE AND
DEATH, AND DEALT
IN THE LATTER
MOST FREELY.



LIGHTS!
HEAVENS, I'M
LATE AFTER
ALL!



Oh, they must
be worried
sick.

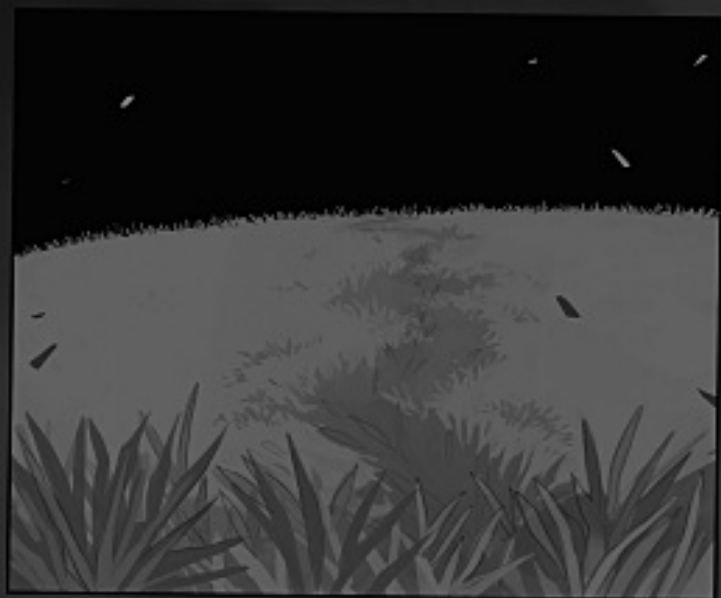


OF
COURSE I'D
GO WANDERING
OFF ON THE
NIGHT THEY
ARRIVE.

MAYBE
THE LITTLE
LELEK BIRD WAS
RIGHT TO TAKE
ME FOR A FOOL.



AFTER
ALL, I
WAS...











YOU
PROMISED,
BABCIU... YOU
PROMISED...!



YOU
PROMISED WE
WOULD SEE YOU
ONE LAST
TIME!



THAT *I*
WOULD SEE
YOU ONE LAST
TIME!



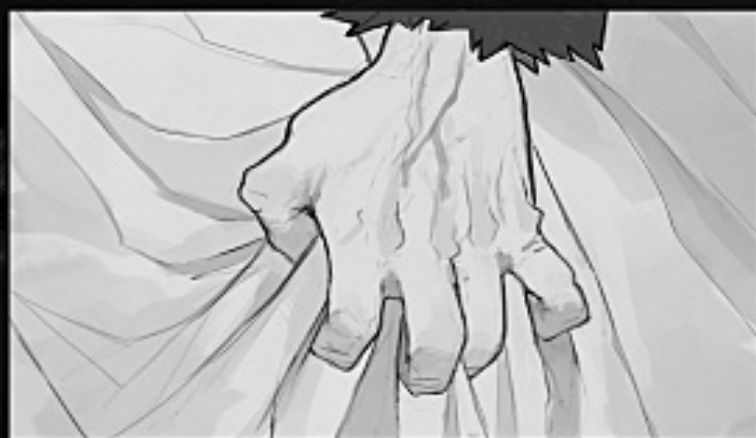
I
DID...

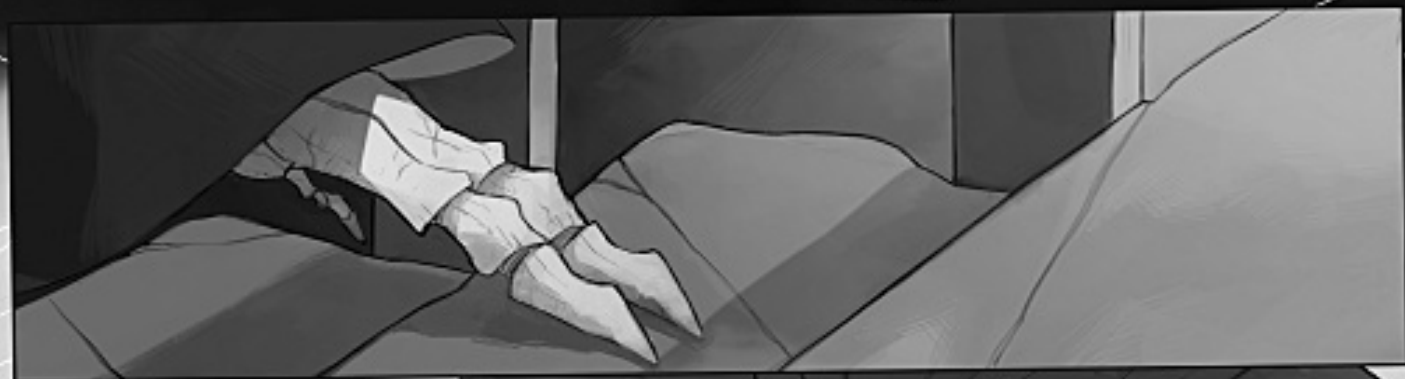


I DID,
ANIU... I
WAS...

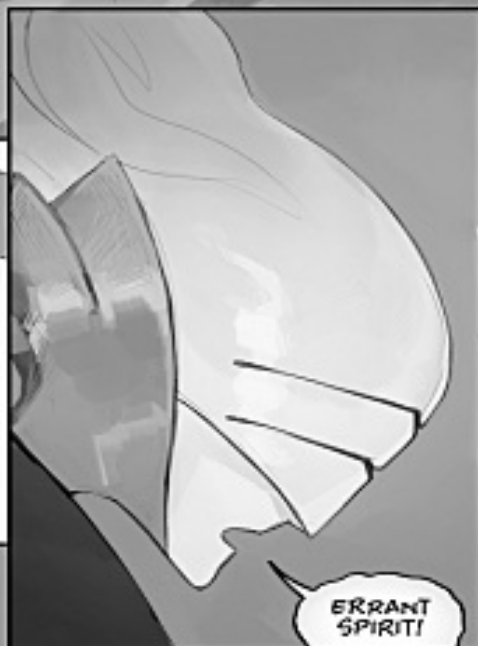


I WAS
JUST COMING
BACK FOR
YOU...





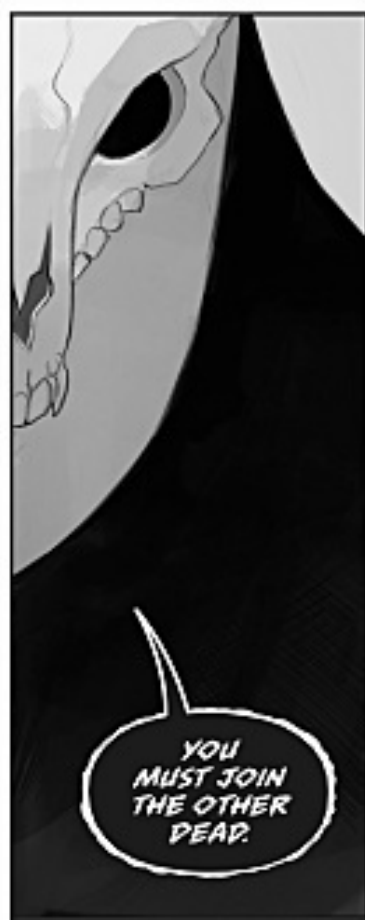
IN THAT DARKEST NIGHT, THE
PLACE BETWEEN OUR WORLD AND
THE NEXT, VELES, THE GOD OF
DEATH HIMSELF, HAD FOUND
THE OLD WOMAN AT LAST.

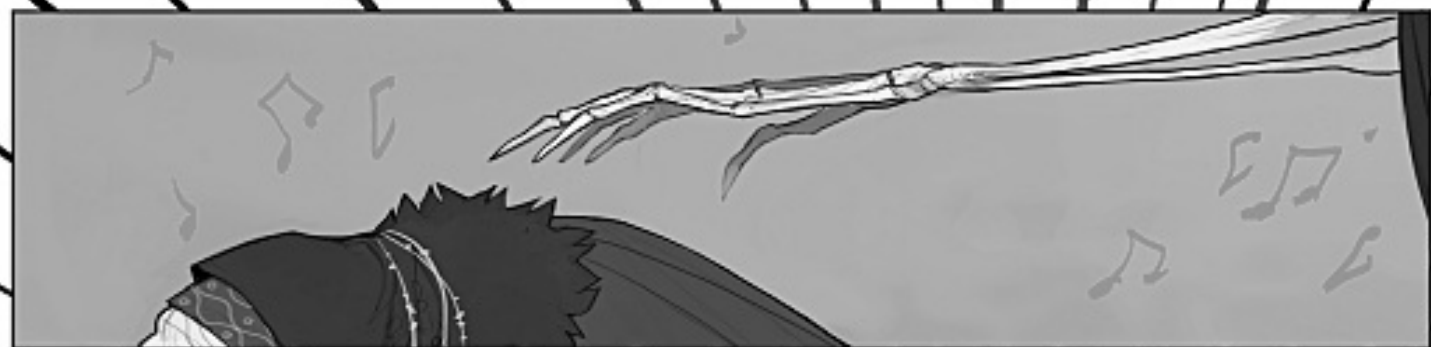


ERRANT
SPIRIT!



THE SOUL
SHEPHERD
HIMSELF HAS
BEEN LOOKING
FOR YOU.





TAKE HER TO
THE PROCESSION.
DRAG HER BACK, IF
YOU MUST.

MY
LORD, WE
MUST NOT
ENDANGER
THE OTHER
SOULS...!

MIND
YOUR RANK,
EMBER. DO NOT
QUESTION MY
JUDGMENT.

THE HOLLOW FATE OF
A ZDUSZA WAS MEANT
FOR THOSE WHO
WERE WICKED...

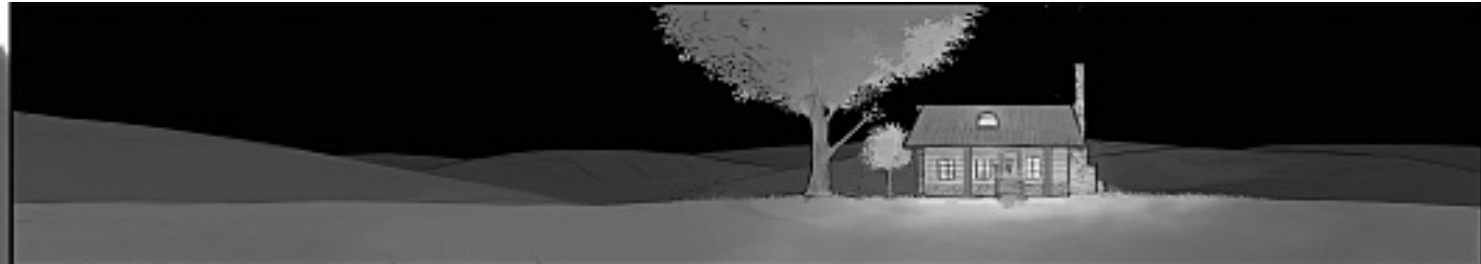
MAKE HASTE, AND LET
HER HEAD THE
PROCESSION.

...NOT FOR THOSE
WHO WERE LOST.

A STWORZE
LIKE YOURSELF DOES
NOT HAVE MY GIFT
OF SIGHT.

AND VELES WAS
A SHEPHERD WHO
PROTECTED HIS
WARDS.

THERE
IS HOPE FOR
HER YET.



YOU SEE, A
PROMISE IS
A POWERFUL
THING.

IT CARRIES ON
EVEN IN OUR
ABSENCE.



ANIU!

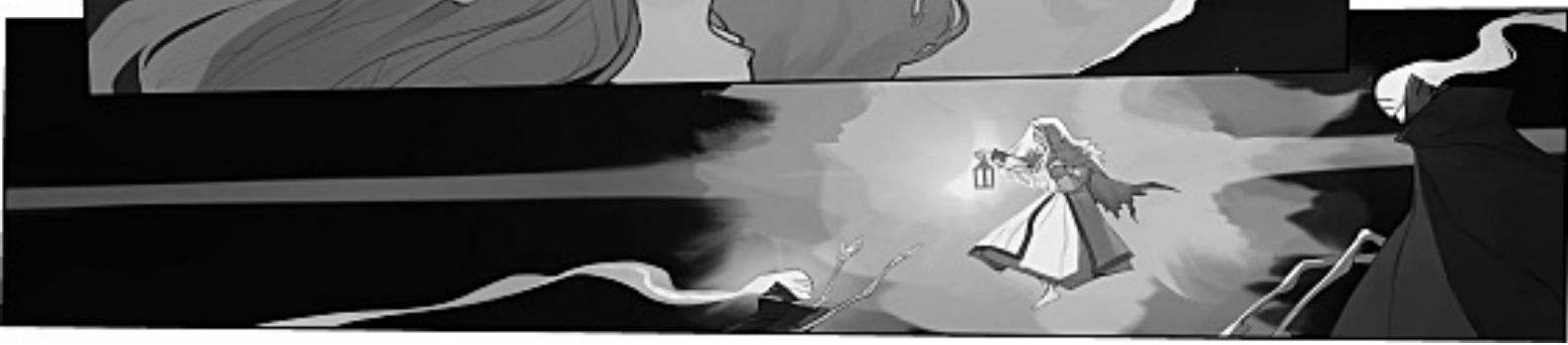
BABCIU...



SOMETIMES, IT IS
THE ONLY THREAD
BETWEEN THOSE
WHO REMAIN, AND
THOSE WHO ARE
GONE.



BABCIU!





UNRAVELED IN
THE BITTERSWEET
SENTIMENT OF A
LAST GOODBYE...



...AND IN THE DARKEST NIGHT,
DRAWN TO AN END, IN THE LIGHT
OF A THOUSAND SOULS AND
A THOUSAND STARS.

ARE THESE THE
SAME STARS?
THE ONES
FROM YOUR
STORY?



THEY
CAPTURE
THE HOPES
AND DREAMS
OF SO MANY
PEOPLE,
DON'T
THEY?

IT'S
WHY I LIKE
LOOKING AT
THEM.



...



...COULD
I JOIN
YOU?



OF
COURSE, MY
FRIEND.



ALWAYS.



THE END.



THE MAKING OF

Jim Henson's™
THE STORYTELLER™
Ghosts



A BEHIND THE SCENES LOOK AT THE ART AND
CRAFT OF THE STORYTELLERS AND THEIR TALES.

With Art and Commentary by

Mank László

Jennifer Rostowsky

Michael Walsh

VER



Tale One Art by Márk László

Márk László Commentary: I tried to keep this page as close as I could to a classic B-movie horror scene—while trying to stay true to the Storyteller's world, of course. A bit of justice is served here: The cruel master of the house is facing the consequence of his own horrible act. Poor guy.



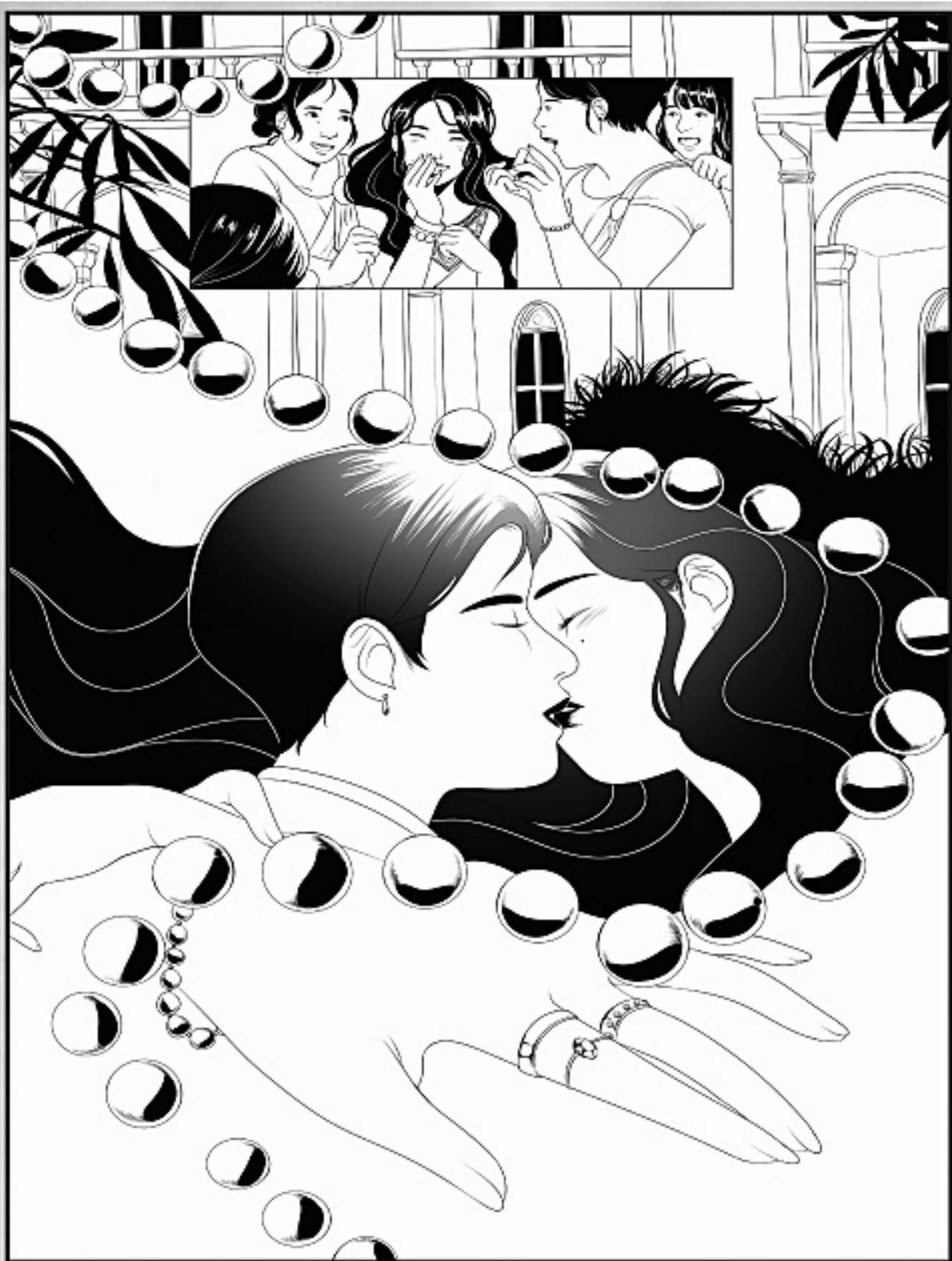
Tale One Art by Márk László

ML: I knew I wanted to include a montage like this in the story right from the beginning, and since we're dealing with a wanderer character, it's a fun and fitting way to show the passage of time and space. Fun fact number one: The last panel is my humble homage to Friedrich Caspar's painting *Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog*. Fun fact number two: I imagined a soundtrack for this scene in my head, and it was "Oats in the Water," by Ben Howard.



Tale One Art by Márk László

ML: This was another scene I knew I would want to include from the beginning—the moment we finally see the *Myling* in action. In the first version of the story, the conversation between the old Wanderer and the ghost was intended to be funnier, but ultimately I felt like joking around in this scene would feel a little out of place.



Tale Two Art by Jennifer Rostowsky

Jennifer Rostowsky Commentary: I had this page in my mind the second I pitched the story. I wanted to make an illustration as extravagant as Molika's lifestyle to really capture how much she has in her possession, so I tried to make everything on this page as lush and detailed as possible.



Tale Two Art by Jennifer Rastowsky

JR: This page was an absolute pain to ink! It doesn't show, but I had tons of layers for every little part where the spirits and the physical world overlapped, and I still had trouble painting over the lines when I began coloring. Despite all that, I think this page is one of the prettiest in the comic.



Tale Two Art by Jennifer Rastowsky

JR: This page was my absolute favorite to draw and one of the few that came out almost exactly as I envisioned it. While the background isn't my favorite thing in the world, I'm very proud of how I depicted the disconnect between the human Molika and the *Ahp* Molika, while still showing their connection through the tendrils leading down to her body.



Tale Three Art by Michael Walsh

Michael Walsh Commentary: When I first started conceptualizing this story, Brendan timidly approaching the Banshee in the middle of a small forest was the first image that came into my mind. I knew that I really wanted to take my time with the approach and the reveal of the Banshee's grim visage. I wanted to build tension and atmosphere while keeping the reader engaged. I intended to zigzag the reader's eyes down the page, leading to the tight shot of Brendan draped in shadow, building towards a "What does he see?" moment.



Tale Three Art by Michael Walsh

MW: On this page, I wanted a reveal, but not *the* reveal. I wanted to frighten the reader but still leave some mystery. I originally thought of this page as a splash, but I felt that took a bit of the impact away from page 13, so I ended up adding another panel and some narration from our dear Storyteller. The mythology regarding the *Bean Sídhe* is very contradictory, depending on the source. During my research, I'd read of tiny, three-foot tall Banshees and imposing, nine-foot Banshees. In the end, I decided the contrast of having the Banshee tower over Brendan would be a more effective visual. Note: I was reading a lot of Japanese horror books around this time. I drew a bit of inspiration from the book *PTSD Radio*, which has a lot of "hair horror" imagery. Hair can be pretty scary.



Tale Three Art by Michael Walsh

MW: This was a really important page (and I don't want to admit how many times I redrew it!). The impact of page 13 really hinged on how well this page built the tension towards the Banshee reveal. Comic book creators actively control the flow of time for the reader. The more panels you add, the longer the reader spends parsing the information on the page. With those last four panels stacked on the right side of the page, I was creating a tight rhythm. The feeling of wanting to move the eye to the next page but still having to absorb another panel. I was looking for anticipatory hesitation.



Tale Three Art by Michael Walsh

MW: I went back and forth on this page regarding a few different details. How tight should the shot be? How much gore should be visible? Should the Banshee be menacing, innocent, or aloof? I knew for sure that the Banshee would be crying tears of blood—I figured that this creature who wept constantly would eventually run out of tears and begin crying the blood of the dead. Whether it makes sense or not doesn't really matter when you are reading about folklore! Folklore is about the poetry of the lesson learned, and in this case I was going for visual poetry, for imagery that will stay with you.



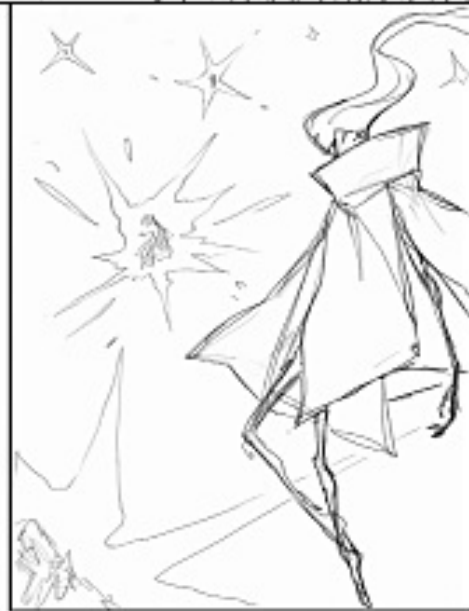
Tale Four Art by VER

VER Commentary: My workflow is a little odd—I go from pencils straight to painting, so it's pretty fun to show these pages in such a drastically different stage. You can see there's still some storytelling decisions I make between these phases: I changed the design of the *Zdusze*, as well as some aspects of *Veles*, and I chose to focus on the little *Lelek* birds in the fifth panel instead of the scrapped symbol on *Veles*' skull. For me, there's a slow transition between my story being an idea and a script, and as something existing in final art—as something I can see. Once I get into the visual aspect of the medium, I will course-correct as I go along and as I get into the relevant (and sometimes fickle) headspace to match.



Tale Four Art by VER

VER: I find that pages with no dialogue tend to be quick, fun, and easy to write, but less quick, fun, and easy to draw. It wasn't until the thumbnailing stage that I had this idea in my head that in their final rush, the *Zdusze* move like a uniform river of bodies, and their aversion to light would cause them to break upon it like a wave. There's that sensation when you have your back to darkness that something might be after you, and that you aren't safe until you are in a bright space—I think that's what I wanted to go for with the Old Woman's escape from these dreadful creatures, and with her finding safety in the light of the house.



Tale Four Art by VER

VER: You can see some remnants of my thumbnails in the very last panel—just to keep a reminder of the negative space in use, and the vastness of the starry, night sky and those who've come to pass against its canvas. When I write stories, I tend to think of the ending first, so I always know where the story must go. This last page was the first sequence that came to my mind, and from here, I found the tale of the Old Woman's last journey home, through the darkest night, and through death.



DOVER GALLERY



TALES ONE THROUGH FOUR COVERS BY
MICHAEL WALSH

TALE ONE VARIANT COVER BY
LORENZO DE FELICI

TALE TWO VARIANT COVER BY
DANI
WITH COLORS BY TAMRA BONVILLAIN

TALE THREE VARIANT COVER BY
ROB BOWYER

TALE FOUR VARIANT COVER BY
NAOMI FRANQUIZ













DANI ♡
2020
Fanzine











the TORYTELLERS

MÁRK LÁSZLÓ is a Hungarian cartoonist who loves long bike rides on sunny, summer afternoons, bad punk rock music, cute puppies, and of course, pizza. He'll fight anyone who's not into at least one of those things. He drew a webcomic titled "The Boy Who Loved a Ghostclown," had the luck and honor to draw a short *Hellboy* story, and hopes to draw even more comics in the future.

JENNIFER ROSTOWSKY is a Chinese-Cambodian-American cartoonist and illustrator from rainy Seattle, Washington who currently lives in New York City. She is an avid cat lover and a fan of the horror genre, anime, and true crime television. Her work is inspired by her love for all forms of horror and her thirst for more representation of queer women and explicit lesbian relationships in comics.

MICHAEL WALSH is an award-winning Canadian cartoonist based out of Ontario and Newfoundland. He's been seeing ghosts since he was just a child and drawing pictures of them ever since. He is well-known for his comic book work on *Hawkeye*, *Secret Avengers*, *Star Wars*, *Jughead: The Hunger* and the *Black Hammer / Justice League* crossover event. He likes to keep a light on in the night.

VER is a freelance cartoonist and illustrator from Eastern Europe, currently living in Scotland, UK. They spend most of their time writing and drawing stories about strange people and distant worlds. VER is somewhat elusive, largely optimistic, and wholly tired.

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